

HOUSE RESOLUTION 84

By Bass

A RESOLUTION relative to the proposed restructuring of the Dairy Research and Education Center at Lewisburg.

WHEREAS, as part of the overall state budget reductions in higher education, the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture (UTIA) has recently announced its plans to transform the Dairy Research and Education Center at Lewisburg (the Dairy Center) into a dairy and beef heifer development unit; and

WHEREAS, this restructuring plan would result in the 140-head herd of milk-producing Jersey cows at the Dairy Center being relocated to the Middle Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center in Spring Hill; and

WHEREAS, for many reasons, this Body believes that UTIA's restructuring plan for the Dairy Center is not in the best interests of this state's agricultural community or the citizens of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the Dairy Research and Education Center at Lewisburg (formerly known as the Dairy Experiment Station) was established in 1929, for the purpose of conducting research appropriate to solve problems unique to dairy producers in the South; and

WHEREAS, the Dairy Center was operated through a cooperative effort between the federal government and the State of Tennessee from 1948 until 1994, when the United States Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service deeded the original tract of 480 acres, title to all federally owned livestock, and all equipment to the University of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the herd of Jersey cattle at the Dairy Center is nationally and internationally recognized for its use in research protocols while maintaining high milk production per cow; whenever dairy research in Tennessee is mentioned in professional circles, the herd at Lewisburg is foremost in the minds of producers; and

WHEREAS, owners of all breeds of dairy cattle are aware of the reputation that the Dairy Center at Lewisburg has earned; since the early 1960's more than 200 research papers, as well as numerous popular press articles, have been published from data derived from the Jersey herd and farm in Marshall County; and

WHEREAS, the Dairy Center's demonstration of adherence to the Land Grant mission of excellence in research and education is unparalleled in dairy research in the University of Tennessee system; and

WHEREAS, in fact, the University of Tennessee Dairy Research program has benefited in name recognition for many years due to the respect within the scientific community for the reputation of the program at the Dairy Center; and

WHEREAS, the Dairy Center has recently become involved in the cellulosic ethanol research endeavor initiated by the University of Tennessee to grow a Greener Tennessee; switchgrass has been planted there to evaluate its adaptability to marginal soils; and

WHEREAS, the Dairy Center at Lewisburg also helps provides for the economic well-being of Marshall County: the workforce of 10-12 employees provides a payroll in excess of \$300,000, and feed, seed, fertilizer, and supplies associated with dairy management comprise an annual budget of nearly \$1,000,000, a significant portion of which funds are expended in Marshall County; and

WHEREAS, as the Dairy Center at Lewisburg celebrates its 80th year of research and education service to dairy producers and the general population this year, it would be counterproductive to relocate its world renowned Jersey herd to another facility; and

WHEREAS, for the reasons stated above, this Body feels that the University of Tennessee has acted unwisely and precipitously in proposing to restructure its system of Research and Education Centers; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby strongly urge and encourage the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture to reconsider its plan to restructure the Dairy Research and Education Center at Lewisburg into a dairy and beef heifer development unit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that it is the sense of this Body that the Dairy Research and Education Center at Lewisburg should continue its current operations involving a herd of milk-producing Jersey cows.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the University of Tennessee and the University of Tennessee Vice President for Agriculture.